1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

Introduction

"I took care of thee in the wilderness." HOSEA xiii, 5.

IT IS MY desire in this book to deal with things of human interest rather than with scientific questions, and where possible to allow my adventures and experiences with the men and animals of the wilderness to comprise my story.

My soul is bound up in this romantic "Arabia Deserta." The great peace and calm of the Arabian wilderness holds me in thrall—that tremendous quietude, which on the last day of the creation must have brooded over the whole world. In the desert I breathe freely and the accumulated ballast of civilized life falls away, like a great burden from my shoulders. Even now I am amazed to think how little man really needs to be happy, and how carefree one is with nothing but the merest necessities of life.

My expeditions into the desert and my life among the Arabs were not prompted by scientific aspirations; the Arab horse was the lodestone. The "white patches" on the map did not attract me so much, even though I lived for the most part in quite unknown regions never, or very rarely, visited by Europeans. It was not even the

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●121 call of adventure which led my footsteps into the wilder parts of the Near East, but just the love of horses and in particular of the splendid Arab horse. So intense was (and is) my passion for this noble animal, that I wished to meet him in his native pastures and there learn his history and the secrets of his breeding; and, if there was a secondary interest, it was to enquire into the wanderings of the Bedouin tribes. This grew more fascinating the further I proceeded, so that I came to study the geographical features of their pasture-areas and lines of migration, their historic past and ethnographical peculiarities—subjects on which I have published in various lands a series of special articles, maps, and tables.[1]

114 The Arabian peninsula is inconceivably vast; its area is half as great as that of the United States of America. My wanderings, naturally, stretched over only a part of Arabia, the highland plateau of the Bedouins that lies inland.

Although I touched the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf more than once, I have never yet visited such well-known places as Aden or Oman, not to mention Mecca and the Rub-el-Khali, which was crossed for the first time by two Englishmen (Bertram Thomas and St. John Philby) only a few years ago. I claim one thing, however: that during my sojourn in Arabia, I lived entirely as a Bedouin. I had never any need to deny my

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[1] *American Geographical Society* (New York, 1930); *Asia* (New York, 1929); *Hippologische Sammlung*, Schickhardt and Ebner (Stuttgart, 1930); *Sportologue* (Los Angeles, 1931); *Sankt Georg* (Berlin, 1930–33); *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (Berlin, 1933); *Country Life* (London, 1934); *Sphere* (London, 1934); *Strand* London, 1935), etc., and Bulletins of the Agricultural Colleges and Animal Breeding Associations in Hungary, Poland, Russia, Japan, Argentina, Egypt, etc.